



BC Wildfire TEAMS

Onboarding Package

2/17/2022

This document was created to support with the understanding of British Columbia Wildfire Service's Temporary Emergency Assignment Management System (W-TEAMS) program. For any outstanding W-TEAMS questions please contact your local Fire Centre Contact.

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Welcome to BCWS TEAMS

We thank you, your co-workers and management support for your participation and commitment to the Wildfire-TEAMS (W-TEAMS) program.

Participation in the program can be both exciting and intimidating. The staff at BCWS will make every effort to provide you with the tools and on the job training to aid in your success in the position you are assigned to. Our goal is to ensure your experience is such that you will learn and grow with each deployment and you will return to the program year after year. We have put together the following information to assist you in having the most rewarding deployment experience.

All information you will need to review or answers to questions you may have can be located here: [Participating Staff](#) and [FAQs](#).

Application Process

Once you have committed to being a participant and have your supervisor/manager approval, you are required to complete the Expression of Interest. Watch a quick [video](#) on how to complete your EOI to ensure it is done correctly. If you are planning extensive vacation between April and September, W-TEAMS may not be for you as fire season occurs during these months.

Your application will be reviewed by your local Fire Centre/Zone and further correspondence regarding your application or participation will be through your Fire Centre/Zone contact. If you miss the January 31 deadline you can still be considered for deployments but will not be included in Fire Centre training and deployment plans. A list of contacts can be found in Table 1 on page 11.

Application Checklist:

- ☐ Willingness Statement, Par Q, and your BCWS Respectful Workplace must be completed and returned to your local Fire Centre TEAMS email
- ☐ Online W-TEAMS Course (via Open School BC) - Request access from your Fire Centre BCWS TEAMS Email
- ☐ Expression of Interest submitted

	Application Items	New Applicant	Returning W-TEAMS Member
1	Willingness Statement	✓	
2	PAR Q	✓	✓
3	BCWS Respectful Workplace (Please Read the Policy)	✓	
4	Expression of Interest	✓	✓
5	Online course	✓	

The Expression of interest and Par Q must be updated annually. Please note if you were a W-TEAMS member but then took a year or more break from the program, you are to apply as a new Applicant.

Please note that ***contacting Fire Centres during fire season regarding possible deployments is strongly discouraged.*** Fire Centre representatives will contact your supervisor and you if a deployment is imminent.

Withdrawing from Participation

If for some reason you are unable to participate in the W-TEAMS program, you must access your Expression of Interest and select the box that states *“My circumstances have changed and I am no longer able to participate.”* If possible, let your Fire Centre/Zone contact know that you have removed yourself.

Training Information

Upon completion of the application process, all Wildfire-TEAMS (W-TEAMS) participants will be required to complete an online orientation course. The course is run through Open School BC and your local Fire Centre contact will be able to get you access to the online offering. Once you have completed the course your successful completion will be recorded. Participants who successfully complete the course will not need to take the course on an annual basis.

For most fireline and Coordination Centre positions filled by W-TEAMS participants, BCWS provides on the job training. This training can be supplemented by taking online introductory Incident Command Structure (ICS) courses available through Open School BC. Please contact your local Fire Centre contact for enrollment.

Higher level instructor led courses are available to participants who have been selected for advanced development and who are supported by their supervisor and the BC Wildfire Service to engage in these sessions. To be selected for inclusion in these courses a participant will need prior deployment experience, consistent positive performance evaluations and be committed to future deployments. It is important to note that course participation may require travel and time away from your regular duties. If you are selected to be part of these courses, BCWS will cover the costs of the training, accommodations, and travel.

For a full list of courses supported, including pre-requisites and intended audience, please review the [BCWS Operational Training Catalogue](#). Please work with your local Fire Centre contact if you are interested in taking part in these courses.

Finance Information

For more information on the finance side of BCWS please view the [Green Book Manual](#). This manual is the Fireline Finance and Administration Manual commonly referred to as the “Green Book.” The Green Book is updated annually. If there are changes to policy or if critical program changes occur after the manual is published, a fast flash will be issued via email during the fire season.

Some examples of information that can be pulled from the Green Book Manual:

- Cheat Sheets for BCWS Finance documents and agreements,
- Purchase Card and Travel Card information,
- Checklists for different positions.

eDiaries for Payroll

W-TEAMS' members from FLNRORD will be automatically set up in eDiaries and can activate their account the same way BCWS employees do. Instructions on how to use the program can be found in the documents below. Your EA will remain the same as your base job and the supervisor on each day will become your supervisor at the incident.

W-TEAMS' members that are from an outside ministry will need to be registered into the system. Your Fire Centre will need to contact BCWS.CWSEDIARIES@gov.bc.ca to have you manually entered into the system, before they can activate their account. **It is your responsibility to inform your Fire Centre Contact before your first deployment** that you are from another ministry and you require a BCWS eDiaries account.



Introduction to eDiaries.pdf



Create Your Employee Profile.pdf



Adding OT to Your eDiary.pdf

Purchase Card

If you are using your purchase card for expenses during your deployment (eg. Supplies for camp, vehicle repairs, food), please ensure you receive the correct expense coding for your incident from the Finance Section prior to end of deployment. You must ensure to submit your expenses daily to Finance. These expenses are critical for reporting purposes. **You are responsible for reconciling your expenses according to your purchase card agreement.** If you have any questions, please contact your Expense Authority.

Preparing for Deployment

Once you have committed to the program, you must ensure you are prepared for deployment. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Speaking with your supervisor regarding your workload and priorities;
- Ensuring you are available for short notice;
- Ensuring you have reviewed your government vehicle availability and local sign out procedures;
- Ensuring you have established child and pet care for immediate deployment;
- Ensuring that you have a credit card for travel expenses, e.g.: vehicle rental, hotel accommodations etc. PLEASE NOTE: *Credit cards which earn rewards, e.g.: Cashback, Airmiles, Aeroplan, Westjet Bucks etc., are not to be used for government travel or expenses. Government issued Travel Cards can be obtained by speaking with your local expense authority.*

Conversations to Have Before Deployment

Preparing for deployment will go a long way in supporting individual resilience. When you are being deployed, it is important to note that you are required to switch gears mentally to focus on the incident/fire response activities and priorities. Often a deployment can have emerging pressures and constant changes; your resilience is dynamic and can change. Being proactive and starting from a place of readiness can help.

With your manager/supervisor:

- Discuss upcoming deliverables/tasks and priorities that may require action during the time of the deployment,
- Create an out-of-office reply on email and voicemail and identify a contact while you're deployed and,
- Plan in advance for return, note that you may need time to rest prior to returning to work.
 - Be sure to check in before the end of your deployment and prepare to return from deployment. Depending on the rotation schedule and personal levels of fatigue you may need to request approval to use vacation time or CTO to take additional days of rest prior to returning to base position.
- In the event your manager/supervisor is out of office, have another person identified that can act on their behalf.

Activation and Deployment

W-TEAMS members may be called upon at any time during fire season (April 1 to September 30). There are several procedures BCWS must follow prior to contacting W-TEAMS members. Please do not contact Fire Centres and ask for deployments. See Figure 1 W-TEAMS Activation Flow Chart.

Once you have received a call for activation, your responsibilities begin. First, you must speak with your supervisor regarding your deployment plan, workload and expected back to work date.

BCWS will send the deployment information to you via the email address on your application (Expression of Interest). Please ensure it is up to date. Prior to departure to your deployment, you must complete a manifest and return it to the email address provided. Please do not use an old manifest as incorrect information may be passed on in error. Ensuring your manifest is complete and accurate is essential.

A blank copy of the manifest titled "Manifest Deployment Workbook" can be located under the Operations Tab via the following link: [Manifests](#). Please ensure you use the Current Years Manifest (20XX). If you are having issues accessing the newest version, please reach out to your local Fire Centre.

You are also responsible for bringing any required equipment with you, (e.g.) laptop or purchase card. Please discuss computer accesses with your local Fire Centre prior to deployment. This may require you taking your laptop to a Fire Centre to have your accesses loaded. If going to a camp, please check with the local Fire Centre to see if any supplies required by the camp can be taken with you.

Types of Deployments

As a W-TEAMS participant you could be deployed locally, within your region, to another region, or to Provincial Headquarters.

- **Northwest Fire Centre** – Skeena Region
- **Prince George Fire Centre** – Omineca Region and Northeast Region
- **Southeast Fire Centre** – Kootenay/Boundary Region
- **Cariboo Fire Centre** – Cariboo Region
- **Kamloops Fire Centre** – Thompson/Okanagan Region
- **Coastal Fire Centre** – South Coast Region and West Coast Region (including Victoria)

The type of deployment will be impacted by where you are deployed to:

- Coordination Centre/Fire Centre: Office setting
- Zone Office: Office setting or local Command Centre set up
- Incident: Local command centre or remote camp set up
- Working Remotely: Your home office supporting wildfire (often during overtime, weekends, and as support is needed)

Check in Procedures

Upon arrival at your incident/deployment, you **must** check in with PLANS, LOGISTICS and FINANCE, in that order. All the information you will require for your deployment will be given to you by these three sections. The information gathered by each of these sections is crucial to personnel tracking, safety, logistical orientation, incident expenses and payroll.

If deployed to an incident/camp, please obtain a copy of the Incident Action Plan (IAP) from Plans upon arrival. This has all the information related to the incident such as operational objectives, forecasts, assignments, and org charts.

Transportation

You will be responsible for arranging your transportation to the deployment site. If you are able to secure a vehicle from your own office, please ensure all proper inspections and sign outs have occurred. Vehicle information is required on your manifest, such as mileage and license plate number. Use of your personal vehicle is strictly prohibited unless you have been provided with written approval from a BCWS Manager. If you are unable to secure a government vehicle, you must advise the requesting Fire Centre representative prior to leaving for your deployment. Alternate arrangements may be made or you may be required to rent a vehicle with your travel card or personal credit card.

Should you be required to use a commercial airline for your deployment, please speak with the receiving centre representative for guidance. The most cost-effective flights will be booked, even if it results in you arriving late.

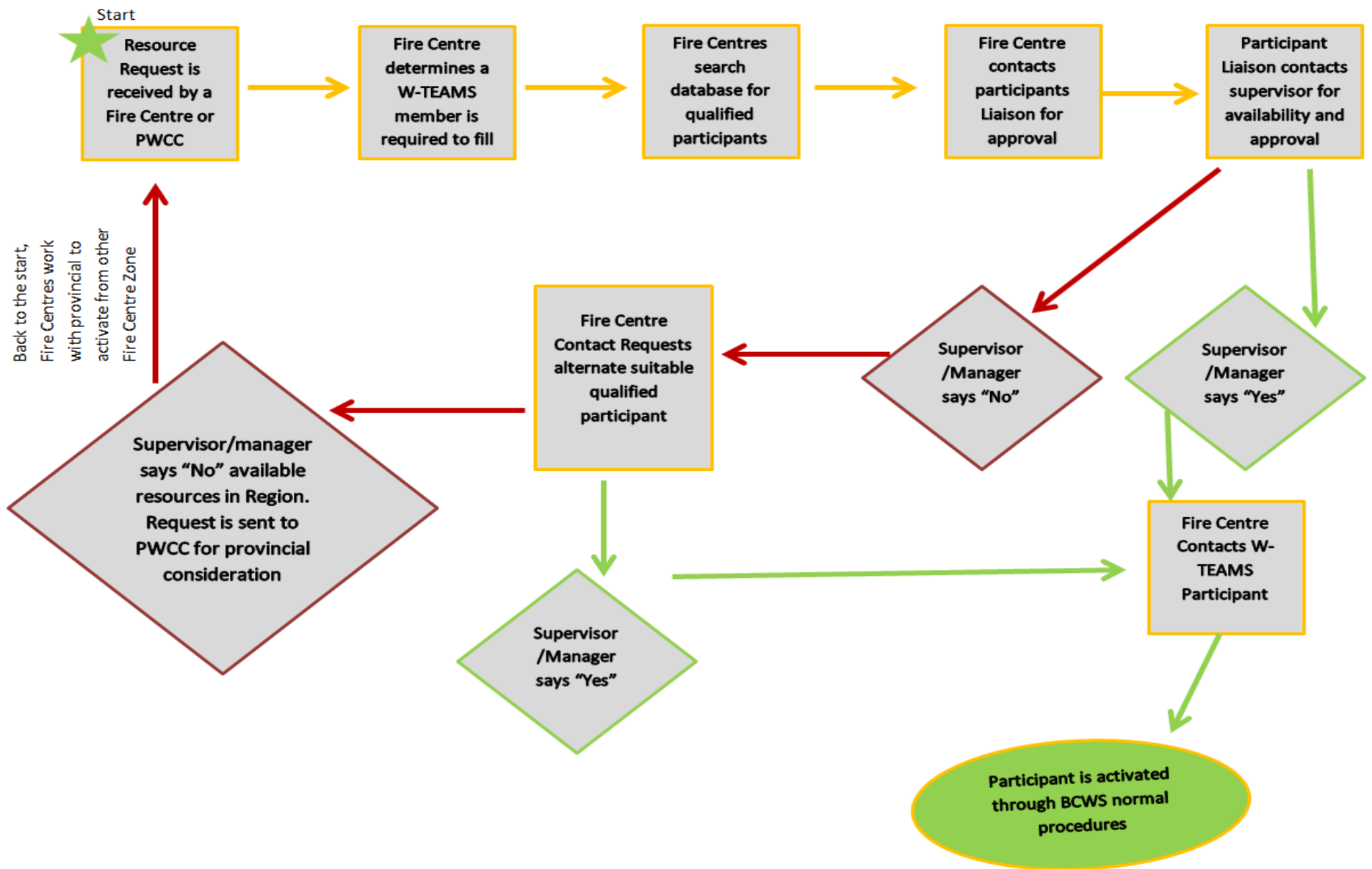


Figure 1 – W-TEAMS Activation Flow Chart

What to Bring

If you are being deployed, you need to be prepared for a 14-day deployment. Suggested guidelines on what to bring with you can be found in the documents below:



2021 Wildfire TEAMS Being Deployed to
FAQs.pdf



A Camp.docx

One of BCWS' employees used a personal deployment experience to create a great "Tricks and Tips" document that will help when packing for a deployment:



Tips and Tricks for
Wildfire Deployments

It is recognized that W-TEAMS participants may want to bring their personal electronics such as tablets or music players but as they are not required for your deployment they will not be replaced or reimbursed if lost or damaged. Please keep your electronic devices at home to avoid potential mishaps.

Deployment Expectations

For those who have yet to be deployed, your first deployment will be both exciting and intimidating. You may be anxious about what to bring, where you'll be, what you'll be doing and worried that you won't know how to do the job; rest assured, you will be fine. BCWS staff and the Incident Management Teams (IMT) have been working with the W-TEAMS program for many years and come with a great wealth of knowledge. BCWS staff members on the incidents or in the Centres/Zones are extremely helpful in getting you up and running quickly. Time is of the essence so the sooner you get working, the better it is for everyone. You'll have guidance and don't be afraid to ask questions. Keep in mind that the person training you was a rookie at one time and understands.

It is important to know that you are going to be relied on heavily and the hours can be long, but the experience and the people you will meet will make your experience very rewarding. You may find that the position and/or work duties you were requested for may change over the course of your deployment. You must be adaptable to these changes and be willing to take on tasks you are asked to do outside of your original deployment position description.

Fatigue management is critical. Ensure you are taking regular breaks throughout the day and keeping hydrated. Pay attention to your co-workers and recognize that everyone is working long hours, spending time away from their families, and trying to adapt to a new work environment.

Personal Deployment Preparation

Preparing yourself for deployment to an Incident, Camp or Coordination Centre is an important aspect to your resilience. EMBC has created a Personal Deployment Preparation package that is a great resource. Although the wording may be geared to EMBC offices, the information and lists provided are relevant to any emergency response deployment.



Personal Deployment
preparation plan.pdf

Single Resource Performance Evaluation (FORM B/FS469)

A Form B or FS 469 is an evaluation of your performance on your deployment and a record that you have been deployed in a position. You will need one form filled out for each deployment even if you return to the same location after your rest days. It is strongly suggested that you do not leave your deployment location without having this completed as it may be hard to track down a supervisor in the off season especially if it is an Out of Province staff member.

It is your responsibility to ensure this form is filled out completely including position, fire number, location, start and end dates of your deployment, and incident supervisor signature. You must email this form to your Fire Centre contact for recording purposes. A copy of your eDiary showing deployment dates will not substitute a [Form B/FS 469](#). Contact your local Fire Centre for assistance.

Ending Your Deployment

You are required to check out with Plans, Logistics and Finance on your last day. You are responsible for providing departure times, anticipated return times, and checking in with your local Fire Centre and supervisor upon arrival home. Failure to comply may affect future deployment opportunities. Please submit any feedback regarding your deployment to your local Fire Centre or supervisor.

It is recommended that you keep in touch with your base supervisor/manager to advise them of your return to work date. Review [BC Wildfire's Operational Safe Work Standard on Staff Health and Fatigue Management](#) to manage rest days between deployments. Rest days do not include travel days and must be full days off. Please note the opportunity to be immediately redeployed is not always possible.

Please reach out to your local Fire Centre with any questions about the application process or any of the documents attached. We thank you for your interest and involvement in the program and wish you every success with your participation!

Resources Available to W-TEAMS Members

Deployments can often be challenging and tiring, and the transition back to your day job may require an adjustment period. Everyone's experience is different and we want to ensure you are aware of the options available if you find you are looking for additional support during or after a deployment.

Safe Reporting Line

Email: safereportingline@theneutralzone.ca

Phone: 1-855-500-6609

For more information about the Safe Reporting Line, visit the "BCWS People Practices Framework" webpage.

CISM (Critical Incident Stress Management)

Phone: 1-800-661-2476

For more information about CISM, visit:

<https://www.nrs.gov.bc.ca/flnrord/cism>



LifeWorks (formerly Morneau Shepell)

Phone: 1-800-655-5004

For more information on LifeWorks, visit:

<https://lifeworks.com/en> or

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/careers-myhr/all-employees/safety-health-well-being/health/efas>



Honour House

Phone: (778) 397-4399

For more information on Honour House, visit:

www.honourhouse.ca



Resilient Minds and Mental Health First

Aid

Email: courses.vf@cmha.bc.ca

Phone: (604) 872-4902

For more information on Resilient Minds, visit:

<https://vancouver-fraser.cmha.bc.ca/programs-services/resilient-minds/>



Table 1 – Key Contacts

W-TEAMS Key Contact List	
Fire Centre or Office	W-TEAMS Email Address
Provincial Wildfire Coordination Centre	BCWS.TEAMS@gov.bc.ca
Cariboo Fire Centre	BCWS.CAFCTEAMS@gov.bc.ca
Coastal Fire Centre	BCWS.COFCTEAMS@gov.bc.ca
Kamloops Fire Centre	BCWS.KFCTEAMS@gov.bc.ca
Northwest Fire Centre	BCWS.NWFCTEAMS@gov.bc.ca
Prince George Fire Centre	BCWS.PGFCTEAMS@gov.bc.ca
Southeast Fire Centre	BCWS.SEFCTEAMS@gov.bc.ca

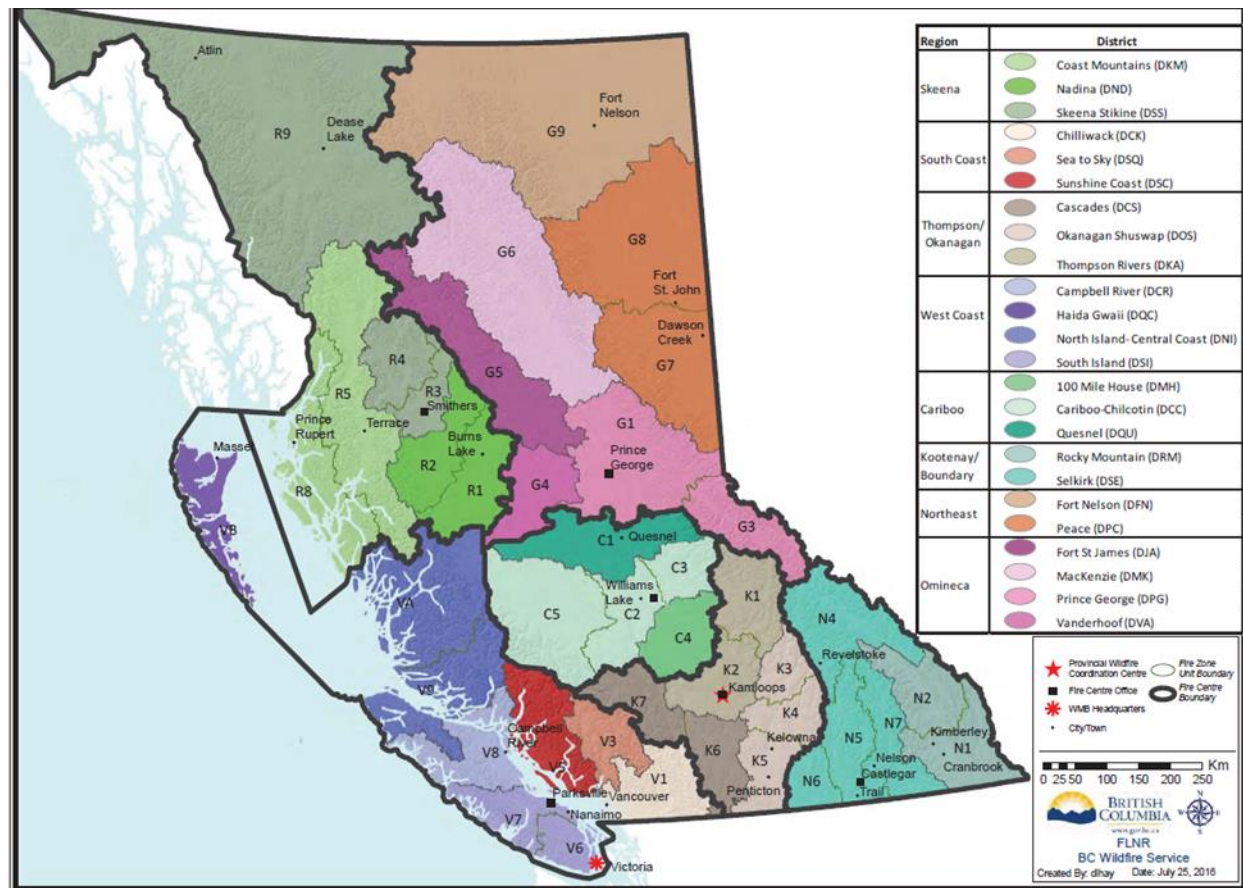


Figure 2 – Region Map